

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 018491

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. EUROCOMMUNIST RESPONSES TO PRAGUE REPRESSION

A. FRENCH COMMUNISTS BLAST PRAGUE

THE FRENCH COMMUNIST (PCF) NEWSPAPER L'HUMANITE ON JANUARY 25 PUBLISHED A BLISTERING CRITICISM OF PRAGUE'S REPRESSION OF THE "CHARTER 77" GROUP. PCF LEADER MARCHAIS FOLLOWED UP WITH A PRESS CONFERENCE THE NEXT DAY, BLUNTLY CONDEMN-ING THE HUSAK REGIME'S STANCE AS REACTIONARY AND AS A BAR-RIER TO THE PARTICIPATION OF THE MASSES WHICH IS ESSENTIAL TO THE CREATION OF SOCIALISM.

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EMBASSY PARIS COMMENT: WHILE THE ARTICLE ITSELF MAY HAVE BEEN THE SUBJECT OF DEBATE WITHIN THE PCF, EVENTS SUCH AS THE HARSH CZECHOSLOVAK RESPONSE TO THE "CHARTER 77" SIGNERS ARE DRIVING THE PARTY TOWARD ISSUING MORE SWEEPING DEFINI-TIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS. THIS FURTHER DEEPENS THE GULF BETWEEN THE PCF AND MOSCOW. THE TENSION HAS NOW REACHED THE POINT WHERE THE PCF REPORTEDLY MAY BE UNWILL-

ING TO PROMISE TO SEND A SUITABLE DELEGATION TO CALL ON

BREZHNEV DURING HIS PROPOSED VISIT HERE. FOR THEIR PART, THE SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN EMBASSIES HERE ARE SHOWING UNVARNISHED IRRITATION AT THE PCF AND ARE RETALIATING IN SMALL, NASTY WAYS.

B. AND A REBUKE FROM MILAN

OUR CONSULATE IN MILAN REPORTS THAT COMMUNIST LEADERS IN MILAN AND LOMBARDY ALSO HAVE GONE ON RECORD AS CONDEMNING PRAGUE'S REPRESSION OF "CHARTER 77" SIGNERS. MILANESE SOCIALISTS TOLD THE CONSULATE THAT THE CZECHOSLOVAK AFFAIR IS AN EMBARRASSMENT TO THE LOCAL PCI, WHICH TOOK ITS STAND AFTER AN ANTI-PRAGUE INITIATIVE BY THE SOCIALISTS. ALTHOUGH THE PCI'S MILANESE LEADERSHIP IS CONVINCED THAT PRAGUE IS IN THE WRONG, THE LOCAL RANK AND FILE REPORTEDLY FEEL OTHERWISE. (CONFIDENTIAL) PARIS 2550 AND (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) MILAN 154, 1/26.)

2. FUKUDA PREFERS US AS SITE FOR ECONOMIC SUMMIT

EMBASSY TOKYO REPORTS THAT PRIME MINISTER FUKUDA PRIVATELY PREFERS AN ECONOMIC SUMMIT IN THE US RATHER THAN EUROPE. SOURCES IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE TOLD THE EMBASSY THAT THIS PREFERENCE PROMPTED FUKUDA'S SUGGESTION BY TELEPHONE TO PRESIDENT CARTER THAT HE TAKE THE INITIATIVE IN SETTING THE SITE. FUKUDA REPORTEDLY IS WILLING TO HOLD THE MEETING IN JAPAN IF OTHERS DESIRE, AND WOULD AGREE WITHOUT CONFIDENTIAL

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ENTHUSIASM TO A EUROPEAN VENUE. (CONFIDENTIAL) TOKYO 1175, 1/26.)

3. GISCARD IN JIDDA

EMBASSY JIDDA REPORTS THAT KING KHALID'S RECEPTION OF PRESIDENT GISCARD WAS ELABORATE AND CORDIAL AND THAT SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS FOCUSED ON ARAB/ISRAELI PROBLEMS AND LEBANON. AMONG THE PUBLIC PRONOUNCEMENTS WERE:

--GISCARD'S ASSERTION THAT A MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT SHOULD BE BASED ON ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL TO PRE-1967 FRONTIERS AND THE RIGHT OF PALESTINIANS TO A HOMELAND;

--AGREEMENT BY THE TWO SIDES THAT AN INDEPENDENT DJIBOUTI IS ESSENTIAL FOR REGIONAL SECURITY; AND

--THE FRENCH STATEMENT OF READINESS TO DISCUSS BUILDING A NUCLEAR RESEARCH CENTER IN SAUDI ARABIA.

(LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) JIDDA 687, 1/26.)

4. GUYANA: BURNHAM ILLNESS UNDERSTATED?

FOREIGN MINISTER WILLS TOLD CHARGE BLACKEN ON JANUARY 26 THAT PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM HAD SUFFERED A MILD HEART ATTACK AND WOULD BE OUT OF ACTION FOR ABOUT A MONTH. LATER IN THE CONVERSATION, HOWEVER, WILLS TALKED OF A BREAKDOWN AND SAID SOME OF HIS COLLEAGUES ARE "SCRATCHING AROUND" FOR THE SUCCESSION.

CHARGE'S COMMENT: I INFER FROM WILLS' WORDS THAT BURNHAM'S SITUATION IS MORE SERIOUS THAN WILLS IS WILLING TO SAY DIRECTLY. THERE ARE REPORTS THAT BURNHAM HAD BEEN SLEEPING ONLY ONE TO THREE HOURS PER NIGHT. HIS PRESENT INCAPACITATION IS THEREFORE NOT SURPRISING. (CONFIDENTIAL)
GEORGETOWN 192, 1/26.)
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